

Korea

Korea is a [presidential republic](#) in [East Asia](#), occupying the southern half of the [Korean Peninsula](#). Also known as the "[Land of the Morning Calm](#)", it is neighbored by [China](#) to the west, [Japan](#) to the east and borders [North Korea](#) to the north. South Korea's capital and largest city is [Seoul](#), the second largest [metropolitan city](#) in the world. The population has also been shaped by international migration. Following the [division of the Korean peninsula](#) after World War II, about four million people from North Korea crossed the border to South Korea. The current population of South Korea is roughly 48,850,000.

Officially, as of the summer of 2007, there are just over 1 million foreigners living in Korea. Of the religious people, 29.3% are [Christian](#) (of which 18.3% (on total) profess to be [Protestants](#) and 10.9% to be [Catholics](#)), 22.8% are [Buddhist](#), and the rest adheres to [Islam](#) and various [new religious movements](#) including [Jeungism](#), [Daesunism](#), [Cheondoism](#) and [Wonbuddhism](#). South Korea retains centuries-old customs and traditions, such as its [cuisine](#), [ancestor worship](#), and [Confucius](#) ideals. Foods like Steamed Ric, [Bulgogi](#), (Korean style beef BBQ), [Kimbap](#) (rice roll wrapped in seaweed), [Mandu](#) (dumplings), Doenjang jjigae (fermented soybean paste), [Japchae](#) (Boiled sweet potato starch noodles mixed with fried vegetables), [Tteokbokki](#), (a broiled dish made with sliced rice cake, seasoned beef, fish cakes and vegetables), [Bibimbap](#) (mixed rice with vegetables, beef, egg and chili pepper paste) and [Kimchi](#) (fermented vegetables) are staples of the Korean diet. Especially well-known throughout the world is the [kimchi](#) (a spicy dish made of Chinese cabbage and other seasonings).

South Korea shares its traditional culture with [North Korea](#), but the two Koreas have developed distinct contemporary forms of culture since the peninsula was divided in 1945. The contemporary culture of South Korea is heavily dominated by technology, including feature-rich cell phones and pervasive [online games](#). South Korea today features high penetration of high-speed internet access to households. In South Korea, computer games take on a sport-like presentation. The professional leagues are televised with announcers, professional players and major corporate sponsors.
